

Post-Event Summary Report

Name of Event: "Lighting and the Visual Environment for Senior Living"

Date of Event: 27 September 2005

Location of Event: American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging,
Washington D.C.

Number of Persons Attending: 25

Sponsoring Organizations: Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, the
Institute for the Future of Aging Services and the American Association of Homes and
Services for the Aging.

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Priority Issue #1: Greater understanding of the affects of visible light on physical and
mental health which greatly impact the health, independence, and life safety of older
adults. Light affects more than vision. Electric light and daylight influence sleep,
depression, the immune system, and cancer growth rates, all of which impact individuals
and society. Simple preventative measures may offset these future costs.

Barriers: 1) Lack of large scale human studies documenting known effects and
determining mechanisms and appropriate applications, 2) Lack of communication
between basic researchers and policy makers who influence lighting applications. 3)
Government institutions such as CMS, HUD, and HHS do not recognize the lighting
needs of older adults.

Solutions: 1) Funding of Research by the National Institutes of Health to Establish
Guidelines for Lights effects on Improving Physical and Mental Health. 2) Development
of multidisciplinary teams to encourage communication between researchers and
professional design organizations to interpret and implement research into effective
design solutions. 3) Participation of government institutions in the multidisciplinary team,
to foster awareness, education, and dissemination of information regarding the lighting
needs of older adults.

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Priority Issue #2: Recognition of lighting standards to support aging vision in federally-
funded housing projects and hospitals.

Barriers: Disconnect between organizations that establish lighting standards
(Illuminating Engineering Society of North America [IESNA]) and implementers of
public projects.

Solutions: 1) Adoption of existing Age-Related Lighting Standards published by the
IESNA for Federally Funded Projects. 2) Adoption of Age-Related Lighting Standards
into the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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Priority Issue #3: Effect and control of lighting glare on older drivers during nighttime driving. Older people are much more sensitive to glare than younger people. This is a public safety issue.

Barriers: 1) Roadway lighting is presently designed for younger drivers. 2) Lack of understanding of glare tolerance among older drivers. 3) Lack of research to establish acceptable limits for equipment, i.e., automotive lights, street lights, and roadway signage lighting.

Solution: 1) Research to determine glare limits of older drivers. 2) Development of standards for incorporation into Federal Highway Administration policy documents. 3) Federal funding to disseminate this public safety information.

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